

Hoseanthus Merrill, n. gen.

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In Journal No. 76, p. 114. Mr. Merrill gives as a New Genus *Hoseanthus* for my genus *Hosea* (Verbenaceae) on the ground that Dennstedt had previously published a genus *Hosea*. This is quite unnecessary additional synonym. Dennstedt got hold of a copy of Rheede's Hortus Malabaricus a work in several volumes of rather poor drawings of South Indian plants, and published a Schluessel zum Hortus Indicus Malabaricus in 1818.

In cases where the drawing was so poor as to be not identifiable he gave it a new generic and specific name, but as no description whatever was published by him or even any suggestion as to the order of the plant these names rank as *nomina nuda* and are valueless. One of these plants was apparently a shrub which was so ill done that it is impossible to certainly identify it and to this sketch Dennstedt gave the name in his list of *Hosea*. Whatever the picture was intended to represent, it has doubtless long ere this received a properly accredited name and description, but I cannot find that any one has ever identified it and I do not know what it is meant for. Where the drawings in this work have been later identified Dennstedt's name has sometimes been retained, though as he did not ever describe one of them, the names were mere *nomina nuda* and might have been dropped. This being the case it is quite unnecessary to add to the ever increasing synonyms by substituting *Hoseanthus* for *Hosea* to retain the latter name for a plant which no one has ever identified and probably never will identify, and which the author Dennstedt never saw in his life nor I expect, would have recognized if he did see it. Dennstedt was evidently not so much a botanist as a compiler of lists; after publishing a Flora of Weimar in Germany he published about 4 compilations of lists of cultivated plants and the above mentioned Schluessel, and nothing else. One cannot protest too strongly against the unnecessary increase of synonyms for plants. Scientifically it has no value at all and only adds to confusion, and bulk of literature for no useful purpose.